

B1 heating element 36, 37 is provided in the form of a sheet-like heating element 71 positioned in said recess, with the result that, in the case of the present example, said heating element acts in the downward direction, that is to say it acts on a pack positioned beneath the heating element 71.--

IN THE CLAIMS:

Cancel claims 1 and 2 without prejudice.

Amend claims 3, 4, and 14 to read as follows:

Sub C17
B2 --3. (Amended) Apparatus for producing packs (10) with an outer wrapper (13) made of film, in particular hinge-lid boxes for cigarettes, a film blank which is folded around the pack (10) having folding tabs which are connected to one another by thermal sealing in the region of a sealing station (25), characterized by the following features:

- a) the packs (10) can be transported cyclically along a straight conveying path in a plurality of, in particular ~~two~~, pack rows (22, 23) arranged one above the other,
- b) in a first region the conveying path (28, 29) is configured as a sealing station (25) with sealing jaws (30, 31) arranged at either side of the conveying path (28, 29) for the purpose of sealing the laterally directed-folding tabs, and
- c) the sealing station (25) is followed in the region of the conveying path (28, 29) by a shrinking station (26) for the purpose of shrinking the outer wrapper (13) through the application of heat, wherein the shrinking station (26) has movable thermal elements, in particular heating plates (32, 33) which can be moved against at least one side of the packs (10) for transmitting heat to the packs (10).

4. (Amended) Apparatus according to Claim 3, characterized in that the heating plates (32, 33) can be moved against an upwardly directed front side of the packs (10).

Sub 37 14. (Amended) Apparatus according to Claim 4, characterized by the following features:

- B3
- d) during transport along the horizontal conveying path (28, 29), the packs (10) of the top pack row (22) can be conveyed in the upward direction that such packs (10) of the top pack row (22) can be conveyed over a heating element - heating plate (33) - assigned to the packs (10) of the bottom pack row (23),
 - e) the heating plate (33) has an obliquely directed run-on surface (40) for the packs (10) of the top pack row (22),
 - c) the run-on surface (40) extends across the full (transverse) extent of the packs (10), and
 - d) the run-on surface (40) has an oblique edge (47) as a boundary.--
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REMARKS

Claims 1 and 2 have been canceled without prejudice to the applicants' right to present them in a divisional application. Claims 3-16 are in the application; claim 3 is the only independent claim.

Claim 3 has been amended to incorporate features from claim 4 in accordance with the indication of allowability in the Office Action. Even though all of the features of claim 4 have not been incorporated into claim 3, it is believed that claim 3 is now allowable in view of the